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## **N • E • W • S   R • E • L • E • A • S • E**

### **Fairbanks teacher wins Milken Educator Award**

Morgan A. Gray, a teacher in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, has received a Milken Educator Award from the Milken Family Foundation.

Gray was honored at a ceremony at the November 1 meeting of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education.

“Morgan Gray’s accomplishment reminds us of the hard work and creativity that outstanding teachers bring to their classrooms,” said Alaska Education Commissioner Roger Sampson, who attended the presentation. “The 61 Alaska educators who have won the prestigious Milken Educator Award represent a larger pool of talented and dedicated teachers and principals who benefit our state’s children every day.”

Gray will receive \$25,000 with no strings attached from the Milken Family Foundation of Santa Monica, California, during a national education conference in May in Washington, D.C. He was one of up to 100 winners this year.

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development created a blue ribbon committee to identify and evaluate Alaska educators for the award, which can include principals as well as teachers. Educators do not nominate themselves. The Milken Family Foundation makes the final selection.

The recipients are chosen for their educational talent, educational accomplishments beyond the classroom, potential for professional and policy leadership, and an engaging and inspiring presence. The awards say, in a very public way, that greatness in education should be recognized, foundation officials have said.

Gray teaches in the seventh-grade and eighth-grade science and technology extended learning program at Tanana Middle School in Fairbanks. He has been teaching for 15 years.

Students in his classroom program robots, produce video advertisements, create aboriginal artwork, design web sites, create intricately dyed eggs, and solve complex engineering problems, in addition to the more traditional reading and writing assignments.

Gray organizes optional educational trips to foreign countries during spring breaks. He is known as a strong advocate for the needs of gifted students, and he encourages students to apply to the program.

Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia participated in the Milken Educator Awards program this year. Alaska joined the program in 1990, three years after it began. Sixty-one Alaska educators have won awards worth a combined \$1,525,000, the foundation said.

For more information on the Milken Educator Awards, see [www.mff.org](http://www.mff.org) or call 310-570-4775.

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